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Studies in Sacred Chant and Liturgy

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July 14, 1955

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***THE MUSICAL TEACHINGS OF SOLESMES AND CHRISTIAN PRAYER**

by Maurice Blanc

CHAPTER IV THE POSTERITY OF DOM GUERANGER

I

At the Origin of the Gregorian Restoration: the Soul of Dom Gueranger

Throughout this exhausting succession of opposition, suspicion and internal discord that was the price of Gregorian restoration to liturgical worship, the monks of Solesmes had at least one unshakable support: the example of the great Dom Gueranger. His memory was an unfailing silver lining in what seemed utter darkness.

From the time of *Considerations sur la liturgie catholique* written in 1830 to that of the decision taken by Mgr. Dupanloup, June 11, 1874, to give up the local liturgy of Orleans (the last of the French dioceses to rally to the Roman rite), the good fight of the restorer of the Roman liturgy in France had thus taken up his whole early career. Forty-four years of struggle! Would not even more be needed to make the authentic melodies of St. Gregory live again throughout the Catholic world, and in particular to return them to the Church herself, who no longer knew them?

Dom Gueranger had not bequeathed to his disciples merely the prestige of his example. To him the choir of the monastery also owed its suppleness, flow and phrasing that

* This is the fourth of a series of articles which will reproduce in an English translation the unique book of Father Blanc, *L'Enseignement Musical de Solesmes et la Priere Chretienne*.

were, quite literally, a revolution in the universal practice of the period. Let it be said plainly: this was the most difficult of the discoveries and the most important for the future of the reform.

Some have tried to minimize the role of Dom Gueranger to the effect of saying that he was interested mostly in the practical restoring of principles of execution and would have been satisfied with the chant then in use, without worrying about restoring the original melodic version, since he thought it especially an archeological matter. This opinion of A. Gastoue has something tendencious about it.

It is true that Dom Gueranger shared the opinion common to scholars of his epoch, who did not hesitate to shorten long melismas or to break musical rimes to respect the syllabification of the Latin text, despite the united opposition of the manuscripts. Lambillotte and the Rheims-Cambrai editors would not have been opposed by Gueranger in this regard. But he was not deeply entrenched in this error. Although he did hold, in his approval of the *Methode raisonnee du plain-chant* edited by Gontier in 1859, that in the new edition to be prepared "account was taken of certain modifications introduced in the course of centuries into the notes by way of reduction," he did not disagree with Gontier who called for "a team of scholars and practitioners of chant to work to give the Church an edition based on the principles of science and tradition." So it is that Dom Gueranger was to direct his monks toward paleographic research as soon as the monastery had personnel available for this trying work. Under his eyes Dom Jausions, then Dom Pothier, began their work of examining the most ancient and usable manuscripts.

Whatever may have been the merit of Canon Gontier in all this, however, that of Dom Gueranger was chronologically and really first. Indeed Gontier owed his vocation as scholar and theoretician of the Gregorian restoration to Dom Gueranger, for it is undeniable that the chant of the monks, giving the melodies "an accent, a rhythm that no one seemed to have dreamed of, was a revelation for him." Dom Gueranger accustomed his first companions, and then his

spiritual sons, to the rhythm that he called "prosaic," with regular utterance and the natural phrasing of the melody, from which emerged the free oratorical rhythm (of Dom Pothier), and then the musical free rhythm (of Dom Mocquereau). Let us try to imagine what could have been the aesthetic effect of these efforts, the first faltering steps of the Gregorian resoration.

For Dom Gueranger in the first volume of his *Institutions liturgiques*, in 1840, chant was an integral part of the liturgy. "The liturgy," he wrote at the beginning of his work, "is the ensemble of symbols, chants, and acts by means of which the Church expresses and manifests its worship of God." If religion is confession, prayer, and praise, these three principal parts of religion become in liturgy the source of inexhaustible poetry and, consequently, chant. For

"as all the great impressions of the soul, faith, love, the feeling of admiration, the joy of triumph, are not only spoken, but are sung; and all the more since every feeling established in order is resolved in harmony, it follows that the Church ought naturally to sing praise, prayer, and confession, procuring by a gradation somewhat weakened, no doubt, in proportion as it departs from the principle, a chant beautiful as words, words as elevated as the feeling, and the feeling itself in finite but real relation with what is the object and source of them."

It is thus impossible to conceive a liturgy that is not chant. Later, it is true, in the fourth volume of the *Institutions liturgiques*, having to clear up a "confusion" made by Mgr. Fayet (Bishop of Orleans) on the definition of the liturgy, Dom Gueranger seemed to retract his first affirmation. On the subject of the chants he offered this comment:

"The worship given to God by the Church is manifested in the sacred chants. By this word one means not only the musical harmony of the religious chants, which is only accessory, but the very text on which the chants are executed.

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Now that means first of all the totality of divine offices destined to be chanted, in different modes, in all their parts, and also a considerable number of formulas that accompany the conferring of sacraments and sacramentals. I do not need to recall that all poetry is called song, even when it is not sung, and no one is unaware that the entire liturgy belongs to poetry, and it is in this precisely that chant is the complement of it."

The key to this difficulty is that in the eyes of Dom Gueranger liturgy is essentially adoration, and lyrical adoration. Dom Gueranger had no need to discover this, if in the course of his seminary his teachers had let him hear some echo of the doctrine of the French school. "The first end of piety is to give honor and glory to God in his infinite grandeur," Bourgoing wrote, and Bremond adds this comment: "The liturgy of the Church has as its purpose to fulfill this first duty. It is consecrated, if not exclusively, at least especially, to lyrical adoration." Together with Bourgoing, Bremond cites with visible enjoyment the strophes of Olier:

"Chant in the Church is an expression of the praises, which in the secrecy of our heart, we give God in the interior spirit of Jesus Christ. The Son of God is the true host of praise; yet He is silent in our altars, and in the bosom of the Father, at least in our regard, for we hear nothing of His voice, and the Church is not helped exteriorly or in an apparent manner by it. For this reason the Son of God animates the priests with His spirit to proclaim through them the praises of His Father, and their voice is heard like that of a multitude, *tamquam vox multitudinis*. Jesus Christ, unique in his worship and the homage He renders to God, uses angels to spread his religion spiritually, and on earth He uses the organ of men to spread it corporally, thus making on earth and in heaven a perpetual concert of praises. This must be the consolation of those who sing plain-chant, which, in its measures and pauses, is regulated by the method and ordinary rule of God."

Did not young Prosper Gueranger, seminarian and priest, pause here as though faced with revelation of his mission in life?

“These souls dedicated to chant may be sure that they have one of the purest and most eminent functions. They are not only joined with the whole Church, but with the angels of heaven, joined to God in Christ, and besides they are joined with Christ Himself Whom they serve as a supplement to be heard by the Church through their actions. Thus they are the completion and fulness of Jesus Christ, who spreads and multiplies through them the praises of His Father, and they perform the very function of the Word in eternity, which is the universal and perfect praise of God. That is why all these chanters are self-absorbed in Christ and ceaselessly united, to be animated . . . by a perfect religion in their praises.”

But enough for the seventeenth century. Now for the intellectual riches of the Abbot of Solesmes, this time in the general preface of the *l'Annee Liturgique*.

“Let not the soul, spouse of Christ, given desires of prayer, be afraid to become dried up on the very brink of these marvelous waters of the Liturgy, now murmuring like the brook, now roaring like the torrent, now inundating like the sea; let it approach and drink this clear, pure water that *comes forth to life eternal* (John 4:14); for this water emanates from the *very fountains of the Savior* (Isaias 12:3), and the Spirit of God fertilizes it with His virtue, so that it may be sweet and nourishing *to the panting hart* (Ps. XII, 2). Let the soul, beguiled by the charms of contemplation, not be afraid of the brilliance and harmony of the chants of liturgical prayer. Is it not itself an instrument of harmony under the divine touch of that Spirit that possesses it? Certainly, it should hear the heavenly colloquy as the psalmist himself, that organ of all true prayer, received from God and the Church. Is it not to his harp that he has recourse when he wishes to enliven the sacred flame in his heart, and say “My heart is ready”? Other times, carried beyond the touch of the world, *he has entered into the powers of the Lord*

(Psalm 70), and abandons himself to a holy intoxication. In order to relieve the ardor that consumes him, he bursts into the sacred wedding song: *My heart has conceived a sublime poem; I will dedicate my canticle to the King himself.* And he tells again the beauty of the conquering Spouse and the graces of the Beloved (Psalm 154). Thus, for the man of contemplation, liturgical prayer is both the principle and the result of the visitations of the Lord.

A perfect and full exegesis of this long preamble would demand a master in spiritual theology. Let us discern two essential ideas, which are the very heart of the ideas of Dom Gueranger on the liturgy: 1. the liturgy is contemplation; 2. it is poetry or lyricism. It is contemplation, and even of the highest sort, because being the prayer inspired by the Spirit that cries in us *Abba Father*, it can only be the highest sort of prayer. Being sublime contemplation it is necessarily a "holy intoxication," as Dom Gueranger says, or a *sobria edbrietas*, as the Fathers said; that is to say, the soul, in a calm transport, lets itself be seized by the Spirit, gives up self-expression to let itself be the voice of the Spirit. The role of clear reason, then, is to be silent, to renounce taking the lead in order to leave this role to the Holy Spirit; the activity in which the theological virtues are exercised to the maximum is employed in remaining docile. This withdrawing of rational direction in purely contemplative prayer, this supra-rational direction that is substituted, causes the soul, when it reaches the heights of prayer, to seem intoxicated and given over to an enthusiasm where spiritual affectivity dominates. This character will also be an essential side, the highest and in this sense the most specific, of liturgical prayer.

To this first idea is joined another: namely that this supernatural "intoxication" cannot be expressed in a collective way except by means of what, in created and purely natural things, is called lyricism. The contemplative soaring will be expressed by a poetic soaring. The only language that befits high contemplation is song, music, poetry (and one may add all the arts). Dom Gueranger says that David, at the peak of his colloquy with God, *has recourse to his harp.* Everything is summarized there. The harp represents

poetry, chant, lyricism. Poetry is not prayer; but the character of free unfolding, of intoxication, affectivity and musicality proper to it establishes that among all the modes of human language it is the only one that offers some resemblance to high contemplation and is accordingly apt to translate it.

One may say that these are the summits which the soul will attain only for moments at a time and which place liturgical prayer beyond the ordinary paths and rhythms of Christian piety. Besides, it may be objected, Dom Gueranger himself remarked that he was speaking only of the visits of the Lord, reserved to the contemplative.

Indeed, and in the same preface of the *Liturgical Year* a complete study of his thought recalls a text like this:

“In the divine psalmody several degrees are counted, so that the lower ones lean on earth and are accessible to souls that labor in the purgative way; inasmuch as it rises on this mystic stairway, the soul feels itself enlightened by a heavenly ray, and reaching the height it finds union and rest in the Sovereign Good.”

However this may be, one cannot deny that the author of the *Liturgical Year* conceives the liturgy above all as *affective* prayer, enthusiastic prayer, prayer in poetry and music, and that he is far from those who find in the liturgy only a school in which the faithful receive teaching, an illustrated pedagogy to complement the catechism. He is still further from those who make an asceticism of it, in which the Christian exercises moral virtues. The Liturgy, for Dom Gueranger, is placed at the outset on the plane of the theological virtues; it is expressive of the theological virtues and expressive by means of poetry. Let us again see what he says:

“Finally, the *Liturgical Year*, whose plan we have just traced, will initiate us to the sublimest poetry that man has been able to attain here below. Not only will we obtain from it understanding of the divine chants of David and the

Prophets, which are the basis of the liturgical praise; but the cycle will never cease to inspire in the Holy Church the most beautiful, profound and worthy canticles. Poetry will not be lacking in prayers composed in simple cadenced prose, nor in those adorned with a regular rhythm. In the Liturgy as in the inspired Scriptures, poetry is everywhere, for it alone can live at the height of what must be expressed; and the collection of the monuments of public prayer, by fulfilling themselves, become also the richest deposit of Christian poetry, that which on earth sings of the mysteries of heaven and prepares us for the canticles of heaven.”

In this climate of poetry, a poetry of adoration and of lyrical adoration, Gregorian chant took on a special stamp of calm and pious enthusiasm on the lips of Dom Gueranger’s companions and disciples. What did he himself say of it?

Let us open at random the *Institutions Liturgiques* where the chant is only glimpsed sporadically in the course of the historic account of the vicissitudes of the Catholic liturgy. In chapter eleven of the first volume we see the account of the progress of the ecclesiastical chant at the time of Gregory VII.

“We must yet say a word on the chant during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In its general color, it remained within the character that we recognized in the preceding chapter and of which the Responses of King Robert are the most complete expression. A dreamy and somewhat rustic melody, but of great sweetness, is its principal trait. This trait is produced by frequent rests on the final and on the dominant, in the intention of marking a certain vague measure, and by a long flow of notes on the last word, not without a certain charm. The response of St. Catherine, *Virgo flagellatur*, which seems to be of German origin, offers a livelier movement until the versicle, which is a tender, melodic intermezzo. The responses of Maurice de Sully have a sombre, severe cast, having nothing in common with the graceful, simple fantasies of Robert and other composers of this epoch; but in all these pieces there is no longer the

grandiose simplicity of motifs, the idea of which the Gregorian Antiphonary took from Greek music.”

The reverence of Dom Gueranger for ancient music did not, however, take away his freedom of artistic judgment. Is it sure, in fact, that in his eyes the chant did not attain its height in the thirteenth century, the period of the *Dies Irae* and of the *Lauda Sion*? He

“felt inclined to believe that a special assistance of the Holy Spirit must have guided their authors and discovered for them the heavenly accents that alone were in harmony with such subjects. If now we come to consider the chant with which those incomparable poems are clothed and even embellished, we are forced to admit that no century surpassed the thirteenth in the art of rendering the passions of the liturgy with the so apparently limited resources of church chant.”

Touches of this kind, where an instinctive musical sensibility are shown, could be made into a bouquet in the written work of Dom Gueranger. But what must have been his oral teaching? One wishes that some deposit in the tradition of the abbey existed. And perhaps these lines will stir some monk of Solesmes to become a commentator on this family treasure.

II

The Chant of the Monks of Solesmes, Expression and Model of Christian Prayer

From generation to generation, it is the soul of Dom Gueranger that sings from the lips of the choristers in the church of the priory where, on March 21, 1833, the tradition of the Roman liturgy came to life again. Like the life of their father in God, the life of the monks remained consecrated before all else to the *Opus Dei*, the continual search for the perfect prayer of the Christian, and in doing this, it never ceased to discover in the musical substance of the chant

of Mass and Office new capacities of a lyrical expression of theological life. The choir, as at the beginning of the Gregorian restoration, remains the great means of action of these contemplatives.

Everything has been said on the virtues of pilgrimage to Solesmes. Who is interested in liturgy or music and has not made this pilgrimage? However, it is not at all the fault of the monks if the curiosity that surrounds them has sometimes become a sort of annoying snobbery. They have never sung for the public; they do not sing for themselves; they are happy only in their vocation of singing for God in the name of the Church. The rest comes to them over and above, and in this there are thorns as well as roses.

On the "secret" of Solesmes, what Father E. Mourey wrote twenty years ago is still true:

"There is good singing at Solesmes. On this point friends and enemies are at one; this is a definite step established. But where the mystery begins is when one wishes to find the source of this masculine beauty. We recall two outbursts that could be called famous, if everything did not repeat itself on our planet.

"About forty years ago, in the heroic days of the Gregorian restoration, remarkable voices animated the choir of the abbey. Naturally they were used as arguments. We still hear the exclamations of their opponents. "What is so remarkable? With such voices any chant is beautiful; every melody is artistic." Like flowers these voices have faded and were not replaced. The enemies thought they had triumphed. But no, the chant lost nothing; on the contrary it gained rapidly. Something else had to be found as an excuse. It was noted then that such perfection surely needed perhaps two hours of daily practice. This was thought sure. Doubtless the monks practiced the offices at length: nothing was performed without previous practice. And perhaps all free moments of the day, and perhaps of the night, were spent practicing. The most extraordinary suppositions were heard at this time.

Is it not useless to say again that Solesmes is not a conservatory and that one is not admitted or refused according to the quality of his vocal organs?

“The trouble is that both propositions, equally gratuitous, do not square with reality. In the first place there are no remarkable voices at Solesmes. There are ordinary voices, a collection of ordinary voices; but beautiful voices, at least in the sense ordinarily understood, are absent. The second suggestion is even weaker. In practice, a half-hour a week is generally enough. The great feasts demand some rare extra practice; likewise the novices form their voices together with their souls; but everybody who has studied the question is astonished at the result as compared with the means.”

It is with these “poor” means that the monks have merited their riches. Of the musicians won over by them, only one will take our time, for the sake of brevity, and because his testimony is the last word in sincerity. Andre Caplet was taken by death before being able to give the lecture, May, 1925, that he had entitled “My Impressions at Solesmes.” At least we have, however, what he had confided to a friend on his extraordinary emotion.

“There, everything seemed to go together to satisfy in a definite manner the ideal of perfection that was the object of his preoccupations; for he finally found that naked art of an authentic purity toward which he tended, and in this chant despoiled of any uncertain alloy, how happy and viable did that melodic line seem, the form of which owes its riches to the text that it translates, and which, inseparable from that skeleton, is in reality only an extension of the words enclosed in its supple arabesque.

“Certainly the technician ought to appreciate the exceptional homogeneity of a vocal ensemble which, with a perfect intelligence of its respective plans, exposes successive periods of the musical phrase in a legato whose graceful curve is never interrupted by an exhausted breath. But if the artist

was amazed, the man in Caplet was profoundly overwhelmed, for the quality of the interpretation gave him the tangible proof of an intense spiritual life, and as if he had followed by the admirable parabola of these chants the very waves of the believing soul, the musician in whom every expansion rose into an act of fervor then understood better all the grandeur of prayer."

That was the impression felt, too, by a musician like Mrs. J. Ward, from her first contact with the monastery of Quarr.

"The chants of the abbey give an impression of calm and naturalness. No seeking after effect, nor any effort to avoid it. The schola and the community sing with an admirable legato, without giving a considerable volume of voice, but a strong and good sonority, something like an orchestra of celli. What strikes one above all is that really living undulation in which one feels nothing mechanical, but which climbs and reaches the summit of the phrase like the swelling of a wave among others. The monks emphasize in their chant the various repercussions marked, but with such delicacy that there, too, it is only a scarcely felt nuance, a light wave of sound that gives a new impulse, with nothing at all by way of vibrato.

"This is great art, art at its supreme degree, but with something more which surpasses art so far that it seems to be an insult to praise the monks as great artists. As Francis Thompson says, it is as if one praised the seraphim for the brilliant curls of their hair."

In this, the sons of Dom Gueranger are simply conformed to the golden rule read in the first chapter of *Melodies Gregoriennes*: "True devotion produces chant as of itself: chant in turn excites devotion; and this reciprocal action enlarges the value of both, like two mirrors facing each other and multiplying the same image, as it were, into infinite depths." Twenty-five years later, Dom Pothier would say the same: "the art of singing well blends with the art of praying well."

However, there is some risk of falling into a lazy simplification. It is not enough to pray well in order to sing well, as if the mediation of the sacred text dispensed one from vocal technique and artistic education. To believe the experience of Dom Hebert Desroquettes, this error must be very common. Yet, is it not one of the temptations of the devout to imagine that piety suffices for everything? Certainly, wrote Dom Desroquettes,

“chant is for prayer and prayer ought to stir up chant, but chant itself needs strong support. Before praying in the Church and celebrating the liturgy there and offering the Holy Sacrifice, were not foundations and architects and workers needed? To be the worthy support and authentic expression of liturgical prayer, chant must repose first on firm and solid rhythmic bases, which will assure its regularity, its calm, its gravity, together with its life. If these solid rhythmic bases—established in conformity with the manuscript translation or the natural rhythm of our melodies—were lacking, the prayer would be left to the caprices of personal interpretation, and oftenest to pure disorder. For having neglected art, one would have no prayer either, so great is the union between them in the chant of the Church.”

Among the “qualities to cultivate and defects to avoid,” Dom Desroquettes demands the firmness of rhythm based on the exact value and regularity of notes, firmness in pronunciation, and firmness in voice. He wishes “a healthy, severe plainchant, robust as a cathedral,” without this calm obtained by regularity and strength being at the expense of life. Life will come through intensity and accentuation, but without jolts or contrasts, without false dramatics, without passion, with the control and discretion so typical of the whole liturgy.

In 1930, Mgr. Norbert Rousseau, Bishop of le Puy, recognized in this word “life” the voice of Solesmes:

“It is a feast for the ear initiated into the secrets of the Solesmes rhythm to follow the details of this perfect execution, the subtle retards of episemas, the delicate interpretations of particular neumes: the pressus, the strophicus, the

retroactive effect of quilismas, the salicus effect. The light accentuation, with its predilection for the arsis, gives the word its living flame, *accentus anima vocis*, places at the summit of the phrase "the luminous point that seems at the crest of the waves."

The crescendos and decrescendos of the rise and fall of the melody translate, within the spirit of Gregorian sobriety, the *ascensiones pudicae* and the *descensiones modestae* so much recommended by John XXII and communicate to the melodic line a fervor of expression that is very moving."

Bishop Rousseau goes on to affirm that:

"What is outstanding in the chant of the monks is the heartiness, vigor, breath of life that gives the song the 'wings of the dove of St. Gregory.' What a decisive answer to those who accuse the chant of Solesmes of affecting sweetness without fire, debility without virility. Those people have not grasped the power of flight of these voices that, in the discipline of a precise rhythm, reach the peak of a divine enthusiasm.

In reality, the energy of this spiritual soul that shapes the melody of Solesmes is surpassed only by the avoidance of artificial effects, by the ease and freedom of a supple and natural execution. Those are the two characteristics of the Solesmes method: life and liberty, that these recordings bring out marvelously.

Although the choir of the monastery remains faithful to the fundamental principles given substantially by Dom Gueranger for the worthy performance of the *opus Dei*, it is not a minimum point of faithfulness held to by the musical school of Solesmes in its research and teaching. It is not straining a point to relate the whole work done in the Solesmes scriptorium for the past century to the four criteria established in *Considerations sur la Liturgie Catholique*: antiquity, universality, authority, unction. Dom Mocquereau renewed this when he justified his work by saying that the rhythmic tradition found in the manuscripts is "universal

tradition, Roman tradition, primitive tradition.” And when he stated that “there existed in the middle ages, in the golden age of Gregorian chant, a traditional interpretation fixing in the least detail the traditional interpretation to be given the liturgical melodies,” this evocation of the middle ages, the golden age of Gregorian chant, was an echo of the admiration of Dom Gueranger for his “dear middle ages.”

The final criterion of the authentic liturgy, called “unction,” can be defined only by the moving traits; “The beguiling expression of a filial confidence to which is joined the chaste abandon of the beloved; the work of the Spirit of love who ‘prays in the Church with unspeakable groans.’ Prayer clothed with unction is in some way impregnated by the Spirit, of which it becomes the vehicle, and establishes the soul in calm, peace, and order.” And again this, showing the religious aesthetic of Christian prayer, as conceived by the young Father Gueranger, when he was only the collaborator of the Catholic Memorial:

“This precious quality (unction) is the result of order and peace, the reverberation of a soul whose faculties are all held in order and accord by obedience. Now who but the Church with her powerful authority establishes this admirable repose, this superhuman peace, in the heart of which begins the magnificent concert of soul for the glory of its Author? It follows that the more one goes away or the more one approaches the Catholic principle, the more “unction” disappears or appears, in direct ratio with this submission or revolt.”

What Dom Gueranger wrote in 1830 on the unction of the liturgy is very close to one of the favorite teachings of Dom Mocquereau.

“In Gregorian melody, expression is not, as in our music, the result of surprise, dissonance, irregularity; it does not dwell on details, it does not try to sculpt each word, to dig out of the melodic marble the least movements of the soul; no, it results from the *general order*, the perfect *equilibrium*,

the constant harmony of all the parts, the irresistible charm of its perfection.”

Equilibrium and order, surely, but not through the slumber of the soul's emotions. Dom Gueranger could not have been so altogether out of his romantic age as to be insensible of what palpitates in the soul and heart of man. “Liturgy is the language of the Church, not only when it speaks to God, but when it makes its solemn voice resound in the sanctuary, when its children sing with it their faith, joys, fears, and hopes.” To bring out the gravity and sobriety of Gregorian chant as interpreted by the Benedictine aesthetic, one must not banish joy, which is also a Benedictine virtue. The *Paleographie Musicale* has helped the cause of long melismas to win out, though this outburst of jubilation appeared boring and almost improper to the first explorers of manuscripts. Dom Pothier took up their defense: “The melismas, or *jubili*, as St. Augustine called them, have their reason for being: joyous explosions not of an inconsidered musical fantasy, but of a sentiment which (according to the holy Doctor), surpassing what the human word can express, abandons it to overflow more easily into waves of melody.”

Nor can one minimize the musical interest of Gregorian chant, its artistic value, strictly speaking, in order to bring out its interiority. The true disciple of Dom Gueranger will not allow one of these two mirrors to be veiled over, true devotion or chant, whose “reciprocal action increases the value of each.” Unction will not keep Dom Mocquereau from nourishing the sentiment of having worked to “recover the Gregorian style, spirit, and art,” or again “the true, real meaning of musical composition.” But this artistic ambition remains bound to a spiritual eagerness that makes him seek at the same time “the creative Christian soul, creative of our holy melodies which alone can reveal the sweet and tender piety that once moved them.”

*THE CHANTS OF THE MASS IN THE EIGHTH AND NINTH CENTURIES

by Dom Jacques Froger, monk of Solesmes

I. The Organization of the Chants of the Mass

THE INTROIT. The first of the pieces of chant of the Mass is that which our texts call the *antiphona ad introitum*, or "antiphon for the entrance", which we call simply "introit". The intention of this piece is indicated with sufficient clarity by the very name it carries. It is heard while the Pontiff and his attendants process to the altar and serves as a preamble to the Mass.

The way in which the "antiphon for the entrance" is sung is shown to us with great precision by a passage in the *Instruccio* (p. 205, 4) which we give here literally, preserving its somewhat awkward style:

"If the antiphon is taken from the psalm, after it is sung the first verse of that psalm must be rendered; and after the verse, the antiphon is sung; and after the antiphon the *Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto* is added; and once again the antiphon is to be sung; and after it is added *Sicut erat in principio et nunc et semper et in saeculorum. Amen*; and once again the antiphon is to be sung; and then another verse borrowed from the psalm is sung; and once more the antiphon is sung."

According to this text, then, the introit is sung accord-

* This is the second installment in a series of articles reproducing Dom Froger's book in its entirety.

ing to this plan:

antiphon
verse
antiphon
Gloria
antiphon
Sicut erat
antiphon
“another verse”
antiphon

The plan thus laid down for us by the *Instruccio*—the most explicit as well as the most ancient of our texts—will aid us in understanding, without risk of misinterpretation, our other documents, and in particular *Ordo romanus I* which gives a detailed description which we shall now examine.

Arriving at the church where the Mass is to take place, the Pontiff does not go directly to the altar, but goes first to the sacristy. Aided by the subdeacons and surrounded by members of his attending party, he puts on the sacred vestments, alb, cincture, amice, dalmatic, chasuble and pallium; then he sits down. Meanwhile, the deacons vest themselves outside the sacristy before the door, actually in the church itself. When the Pope is vested, a sub-deacon comes out of the sacristy and says: “Schola!” The archiparaphonist answers: “Present!” “Who is to sing?” asks the sub-deacon. And the archiparaphonist answers “Such a one and such a one (giving the names).” The sub-deacon goes back to the Pope, and in presenting him with the maniple tells him: “Such and such a sub-deacon will read the Epistle; such and such will sing.” The singers designated here are the ones who will perform the Gradual and Alleluia at the ambon. From this point on, it is not permitted to change the reader or the cantors under pain of excommunication for the paraphonist who has given their names.¹ The

1. **Excommunication** was formerly the ordinary punishment imposed on erring members of the faithful. It was a serious punishment, but it did not have the character of extreme severity which it acquired during the middle ages, far from it.

archiparaphonist, or "fourth" of the schola, will have followed to the sacristy the sub-deacon who is supposed to transmit this announcement to the Pope, and when all is in readiness, he gives the sign to begin singing. While the acolytes' candles are being lighted in the sacristy, and the incense put into the censer, the archiparaphonist returns to the sanctuary or *presbyterium*, and bows to the "first," "second" and "third" of the schola, saying to them: "Gentlemen, if you please!" These individuals then go with the entire schola to the place before the altar which belongs to them. As soon as the schola is in place, the "first" of the schola begins the "antiphon for the entrance."

As soon as the deacons hear the schola begin to sing, they enter the sacristy. Remember, now, that they had vested outside the sacristy in the Basilica. They therefore go in to the Pontiff, who rises and gives his right hand to the archdeacon (or first among the deacons) and his left to the deacon next in order in hierarchal sequence. The deacons kiss the hand of the Pontiff, and thus holding him by the hand they accompany him in the procession moving toward the altar. They leave the sacristy: in front is the sub-deacon with thurifer, then the seven acolytes with seven lighted candles, lastly the Pontiff accompanied by his deacons who hold him by the hand.

A certain time has been necessary to put the procession in order, and when it leaves the sacristy, the schola has already sung the entire antiphon. The *Breviarum* takes care to note that "when they (the clerics of the schola) begin the first verse, the priests come out of the sacristy."

The procession crosses the Basilica; the edifice is vast in size, the attendance great. The movements of the procession must be very slow. Judging by the description of the procession which takes the Pope from his Lateran Palace to the sacristy of the Basilica,¹ it is quite possible that in

1. This description is given in the first chapters of the *Ordo romanus primus*; anyone at all might accost the Pope to say something to him. It is true that this procession does not have a strictly liturgical character.

crossing the nave of the Basilica, the Pope stops from time to time to speak to someone or listen to a request. Before arriving at the altar, the Pope stops to examine the "Hodies." It is a question of eucharistic bread consecrated at the preceding Mass, and which, carried on a paten by a sub-deacon during the entire canon¹, will be put into the chalice at the *Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum*. The Pope thus salutes the "Hodies," sees whether they are of suitable quantity, and continues on his way.

At the moment that the procession arrives at the position of the schola, the candle-bearing acolytes divide into two groups; four go to the right of the schola, three to the left. The Pontiff with the deacons who accompany him passes through the center, between the two groups of children and paraphonists.

Having arrived at the foot of the altar, the Pope prostrates himself full length. "He prays," says the *Breviarum*, "for himself and for the sins of the people." His prayer is not, however, as it is today, enclosed within the strict limits which restrict it to a psalm, a *Confiteor* and a few brief verses. He extends it at the whim of his devotion.² When he is finished, he rises, gives the kiss of peace to the bishop of the week, to the archpriest and to all the deacons. Then he looks at the "first" of the schola and signals him to begin the *Gloria Patri*. The "first" of the schola bows to the Pontiff and sings the *Gloria Patri*.

Up to this point, what has happened to the chant of the Introit?

We have seen that when the procession left the sacristy, the schola had already sung the antiphon once through and had begun the first verse. According to the plan which the

1. Today the rite of the "Sancta" has disappeared from the Roman Mass. Nevertheless, the sub-deacon continues as in the past to hold the paten throughout the entire canon, at the foot of the altar. Nowadays, however, the paten is empty, and the gesture itself is empty of meaning.

2. This is exactly like what the celebrant does even today on Good Friday before beginning the functions.

Instruccio furnishes us, the *Gloria Patri* is to be sung after the second singing of the antiphon. It is clear, however, that a single reprise of the antiphon could in no way come close to lasting the full time necessary for the crossing of the nave, the inspection of the "*Sancta*,"¹ the prayer of the Pontiff and the kiss of peace given to the ministers. Moreover, the prayer of the Pontiff, prostrate at the foot of the altar, is of indeterminate length. It is necessary, therefore, that the chant of the schola be also of indeterminate length, and be also able to be prolonged indefinitely while awaiting the signal of the Pope.

Thus are we inclined to admit that the plan given by the *Instruccio* is only a minimum sketch. It corresponds with that of the Introit in its simplest and briefest form. The single verse mentioned by our text between the first singing of the antiphon and the reprise which precedes the *Gloria Patri* is there to represent schematically a whole psalm, which can be said in entirety, in principle. Thus we must admit that the schola adds, after the first verse, other verses *ad libitum*, as many as necessary to prolong the chant until the signal is given by the Pontiff.

Must we suppose that these verses followed one another without break? It would not seem so. Analogy with the plan of the *Instruccio* in which each verse is separated from the following by a repetition of the antiphon, leads us to think that all the supplementary verses were also separated one from another by the singing of the antiphon, in such a way that the verses and the antiphon alternated regularly. This point of view is strengthened by the fact that according to Amalaire,² the Office antiphony included, even in the ninth century, the repetition of the antiphon between all the psalm-verses. It is perfectly natural to admit that the antiphony of the Mass had the same aspects as that of the Office. Let

1. Note, however, that the Pope *looks at* the "Holics" but does not stop to venerate them or pray before them. We must not try to see in this anything like an "adoration before the Blessed Sacrament". The practice of praying before the Reserve Eucharist remained wholly unknown during the entire first millenium of the Church, and it would be anachronistic to imagine it as taking place in the eighth or ninth century.

2. Amalaire, *de Ordine Antiphonarii*, c.3.

us say, then, that after the singing of the antiphon which follows the first verse, the schola added as many verses as necessary, repeating the antiphon after each of them.

After having given the kiss of peace to his ministers, the Pontiff gives the signal for the *Gloria Patri*. While the schola, before singing the *Gloria Patri*, finishes the antiphon then being sung, the "fourth" of the schola or archipara-phonist steps before the Pontiff and places at the foot of the altar an "oratory"—no doubt a cushion—on which the Pope is to kneel. The antiphon having been finished, the "first" of the schola sings the *Gloria Patri*, and at this moment the Pope kneels on the "oratory" and turns again to prayer. After the *Gloria Patri*, the schola repeats the antiphon. Then, at the singing of the *Sicut erat*, the deacons rise (they must have knelt, therefore, with the Pontiff, at the *Gloria Patri*), and go to salute the altar. (S. Amand says "kiss it") on each side.¹ After the *Sicut erat* the antiphon is sung again.

Then comes "another verse," as the *Instruccio* says. This is that verse which the *Capitulare* calls the "repeated verse," and that the *Breviarum*, S. Amand and the Antiphonary of the Mass call "verse for repetition." The *Ordo romanus primus* also mentions at this point in the ceremony the "repetition of the verse," an expression which agrees with that of the other documents. We encounter here this mysterious "verse for repetition" (*versus ad repetendum*) whose nature we shall try to clarify. Let us be content for the moment to note its existence and to mark the place it occupies.

Thus, then, after the repetition of the antiphon following the *Sicut erat*, the "verse for repetition" is sung, which is also, as stated clearly by the *Instruccio*, drawn from the same psalm as the other verses. The Pope then interrupts his prayer and rises from the "oratory" on which he had been kneeling since the *Gloria Patri*. While the "verse for repetition" is sung and the schola follows it with the final

1. It will be noted that there is no incensing of the altar.

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repetition of the antiphon, the Pope kisses the Gospels and altar and goes to the throne, where he remains standing, turned towards the east, while waiting for the chant of the antiphon to be completed.

Such, then, is the way in which the "antiphon for the entrance" was sung. It can be represented by the following table which will enable us to note precisely the coordination between the chants of the schola and the movements of the papal procession:

SCHOLA CHANTS	PROCESSIONAL MOVEMENTS
antiphon	procession is lined up in the sacristy
verse	procession leaves the sacristy
antiphon, followed by alternating verses and antiphon <i>ad libitum</i>	crossing of the nave, inspection of the "holies," passing through the schola, prostrate prayer of the Pontiff, kiss of peace to the ministers
<i>Gloria Patri</i> antiphon	the Pope kneels on the "oratory"
<i>Sicut erat</i> antiphon	the deacons go to salute the altar
"verse to be repeated" antiphon	The Pope rises, kisses the Gospels and the altar and, goes to the throne.

It will be noted that our texts always talk about the singing or repetition of the *antiphon*. To follow their indi-

cations, there is no justification for supposing, as certain liturgists do, that the repetitions would have included only the singing of the second half of the antiphon as we sing it today at the Invitatory of Matins. The antiphon was therefore sung in entirety at each repetition, and no doubt it was the entire group of the schola which performed it. The "first" of the schola sang the *Gloria Patri*. It would seem, therefore, that one might conclude that the other verses were also sung by the "first" as solos.

THE KYRIE. As soon as the Introit is finished, we therefore find the Pontiff at the throne, standing, facing the east, and the deacons who attend him are holding him by the hands. He maintains this position during the entire *Kyrie* which the schola begins to sing immediately after the Introit.

Our documents present us with a certain diversity in the information that they give on the way of singing the *Kyrie*. If we are to believe the *Capitulare*, the *Breviarium*, the *Instruccio* and the *Ordo romanus I*, that is, the compact group of our most ancient texts, the invocation *Kyrie eleison* repeated nine times was the only invocation used in this litany. The *Ordo* of S. Amand, a more recent document, states explicitly that three *Kyrie eleison's*, three *Christe eleison's* and three *Kyrie eleison's* were sung.

According to these texts, the presence of the *Christe eleison* among the nine invocations would not be anterior to the ninth century. St. Gregory, however, informs us that in his day the invocation *Christe eleison* was already in use together with the *Kyrie eleison*.¹ This is a minor problem which it is not necessary to examine here.

Let us note simply that in all our texts the number of invocations is nine. The *Ordo romanus I* and S. Amand agree in specifying that the Pontiff is free to increase the number of invocations. The number nine is therefore a min-

1. St. Gregory, *Letter to John, Bishop of Syracuse*, in Migne, *Patrol. lat.*, LXXVII, 956.

imum only. "The first of the schola," says the *Ordo rom. I*, "keeps his eyes fixed on the Pontiff, so that the latter may signal him, should he desire to change the number of the litany, and he makes a bow toward the Pontiff." The *Breviarium* says that *each choir* sings nine *Kyrie's*, and the two choirs of which it speaks are monks' choirs, corresponding to the two parts of the schola in secular churches. We see, then, that in actual practice the number of nine could be greatly added to.

The *Breviarium* adds: "If the priest is alone, he says only nine times '*Kyrie eleison*' while bowing in adoration and then straightens up." In the monastic rite described by this document, the *Kyrie* is sung while the singers were bowed down, whereas in the Roman churches it was sung standing upright.

Thus it is the Pontiff, as we have noted, who makes it clear to the "first" of the schola by a sign whether or not the nine invocations are to be held to, or the litany is to be prolonged. S. Amand, which mentions three *Christe eleison's* between the two groups of three *Kyrie's*, specifies that the Pontiff will give the signs in sequence:

"And when the schola has completed the antiphon (Introit), the Pontiff makes a sign to sing *Kyrie eleison*. And the schola says it, and the regional Defensors who are standing at the foot of the ambon repeat it. When they have repeated it three times, the Pontiff makes a new sign that they are to sing *Christe eleison*. And when they have said it three times, the Pontiff makes a new sign to say *Kyrie eleison*. And when they have completed the nine times, he makes a sign for them to be quiet."

We see that S. Amand brings the Defensors into the group of those who sing the *Kyrie*. The texts of the eighth century speak only of the schola to whom the singing of the *Kyrie* exclusively belongs. In any case, the majority of the congregation does not enter into it. Nevertheless, however strange this may appear, in St. Gregory's day, the chant of the people "answered" that of the clerics for this part of the Mass.

(To be continued)

IN MEMORIAM

Achille Bragers, organist, composer, professor at Pius X School of Liturgical Music, internationally known specialist chant accompaniment.

The death of this pioneer in chant practice, a man who dedicated his life to the music of the Church, shocked church musicians everywhere when it was announced in June. Even those who did not know this noted musician personally will feel a pang of loss at his passing, for there is hardly a choir-loft dedicated to liturgical ideals in which one or more of his works, treatises or practical editions does not enjoy frequent employ.

The editor of the Gregorian Review and his staff wish to tender this public expression of condolences to his family and associates, as well as to record this respectful commemoration of the close of a great career. *Requiescat in Domino.*
J. R. C.

THE ALLELUIA: ASSUMPTA EST

A RHYTHMIC STUDY TO PREPARE THE CHIRONOMY

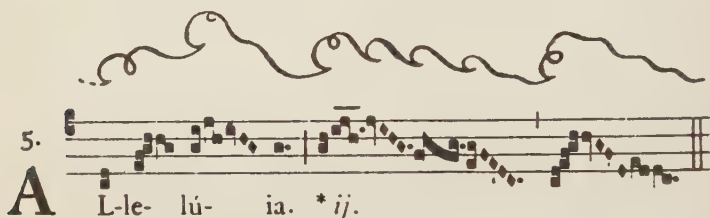
by Father Pierre Force, director of the
Schola Saint-Genes of Clermont-Ferrand

We shall draw upon the support of the commentary given by Dom Gajard (*Gregorian Review*, July-August, No. 4, 1954, p. 50-53) for our chironomic study of the *Alleluia: Assumpta est*.

The *Alleluia* with its jubilus appears as a triptych whose central panel carries the expressive core of the whole work, while the lateral wings, avoiding a too mathematical symmetry, serve as buttresses to this powerful and soaring architecture. As for the verse, its rational analysis is perhaps more delicate and subtle to make. The cadence which precedes the full bar is by itself very conclusive, but where may we place the summit of this short phrase, which holds itself entirely to the lower part of the scale? Dom Gajard remarks that following this, the summit of the whole piece, *gaudet*, "is all the more striking since it is in no way prepared for," and that it leaps up in an explosion of brightness, as though to free the soul from an excess of admiration and praise. We are thus faced with a procedure voluntarily selected by the composer of the original piece (*Alleluia: Te Martyrum* of the Mass *Salus autem*), and adopted as such by the centonizer, for it perfectly suits the sentiments suggested by our text: *gaudet exercitus Angelorum*.

The word *Alleluia* is easy to set a rhythm to. The music matches the form of the words and the intensive summit coincides with the melodic summit. On the pressus of *le* there is a slight pause like a retard, and the movement picks up immediately on the accent. "Attack the accent *lu* vigorously," Dom Gajard writes pertinently, "in a very powerful

arsic movement in order to lift up the seven notes of the vocalise (without, however, hurrying them), and to permit a light sliding over the heads of the two following neumes, whose ictuses are thus reduced to pure points of contact, almost imperceptible." This procedure merely recognizes that the first ictus of the vocalise controls the following ones, and that we have here an *apex group* which abstract analysis can divide, but which must receive in turn its full integrity from the rhythmic synthesis.



The *jubilis* presents no difficulties, either. After the double arsis of the beginning, we have a series of very symmetrical melodic words which are graded down over the descending drop of the octave within which this Alleluia is written. The rise which follows the quarter-bar repeats the beginning of the *Alleluia*.



The verse will give us more trouble. The word *Assumpta* can finish with a thesis which brings it up to the initial arsis of *est*. After an ictus of pure subdivision, which it is best to avoid making strongly felt in chant, falling on the second diamond-shaped note of this climacus, we come to a very ex-

ALLELUIA: ASSUMPTA EST

pressive arsis on the attack of this little formula which occurs frequently in the repertoire to set certain words in relief.

In addition to this rhythm which arises from the usual rules for the placement of the ictus, Dom Gajard notes a second, based on a broader interpretation, but equally artistic, of the given melody. The parallelism of *est* and *Maria* permits, in his opinion, the putting of the ictus of *est* on the final *re* of the climacus (thesis) and the picking up of an arsis on the following pressus (version given above).

Maria can be said practically to draw its own chironomy, so natural is its form, as also that of *in coelum*.

Gaudet: the chironomy will be a transmitting of the melodic curve. After the disaggregate torculus resupinus which is wholly in an upward movement toward its dotted *do*, which will be taken without roughness, the rest is interpreted in thesis except for a tiny "pick-up" before arriving on the final syllable of the word.



We return with *exercitus* to the melody of the *Alleluia*, which, however, does not put an end to our work. Just the contrary, for we note immediately that the position of the tonic accent is changed (*alleluia* has its accent on the penultimate, *exercitus* on the antepenultimate). As a consequence, we now have some real difficulty in fitting the text to the music which are here in conflict. The central pressus which we have just recently analysed as a provisional point of rest, "a slight pause like a retard," is now at the summit of

the accented syllable and moving toward the melodic apex. This is a double reason to treat it in clear arsis.

As for our former apex group, it now requires, because of the weak penultimate which it sustains, to be attacked in thesis. Since we cannot escape an arsis on the culminating clivis of the formula, it seems certain that the rhythmic unity of the melisma is thus compromised. A flexible and artistic interpretation of the whole, however, in withholding from *exercitus* the decisiveness and elan of *Alleluia*, will see to it that roughness is avoided and will preserve the lightness and legato of this formula.

Another difficulty arises from the adaptation of the word *Angelorum* to the melody of the jubilus. In the former instance, each little fragment was rhythmized on its final note and formed one of a series of juxtaposed melodic words. The unity of the word *Angelorum* would be but poorly adapted to such simple juxtaposition of its syllables, more separated than united. For this reason the dot before the articulation of the final *rum* is eliminated. Let us note, in passing, that the same problem is found in the original *Alleluia: Te Martyrum* at the word *Domine* and even one more instance than in the present example. We shall have, therefore, an ictus of subdivision on this porrectus which did not exist in the jubilus, and it then seems even more logical to take the final of the word in thesis.

THE MOTU PROPRIO AND SACRED MUSIC IN THE SCHOOL

by Canon Edmond Dartus, cathedral choirmaster of
Cambrai and diocesan director of chant

“I want my people to pray in beauty” . . . In order that this wish not remain fruitless, it has been necessary to create conditions propitious for the spreading among Christian peoples of this rediscovered beauty of liturgical melodies. The holy Pope also inserted in the very document where he laid down the norms of true sacred music, some dispositions in favor of its teaching, of which the following is a translation:

“In Seminaries and religious Institutions, according to the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, traditional Gregorian chant shall be cultivated by everyone with diligence and love, and the Superiors shall show themselves in this regard to be generous in encouragement and praise toward the young persons confided to their care.”

It would be too much to say that the pontifical directive was immediately heard and followed everywhere. Then, too, how could it be put into practice before the development of a professorial body properly trained in musical pedagogy? Thank God, these experienced masters, trained in these “officers’ schools,” our Gregorian Institutes, are no longer as rare today, and we have thought that the account of an experiment recently attempted in the spirit of the *Motu Proprio*, would be the best means of illustrating the words of St. Pius X and showing those who still have doubts (if there are any) the possibility of their fulfillment.

[Editor’s Note: The account which follows this brief introduction shows what can be done when the vital requisites for adequate instruction in sacred music are given first

consideration. The number of students enrolled and regularly receiving the certification of the *Brevet* granted for completion of the program is not large. Quantity is not sought after, but quality is a *sine qua non*. Note particularly the requirements for each stage of study. Remember, these are high school students. This true application of the ideas of St. Pius X is unquestionably a rebuke *de facto* to mass production systems in which the students are taught music by rote for large yearly gatherings without consideration for solid musical training. What can be done in Europe can be done elsewhere, if those in positions of authority will merely decide that it must be done.]

Initiative for this experiment was taken by the diocesan "Commission for Catechism and Liturgy" of Cambrai.

In 1948 there was added to the *Brevet d'Instruction Religieuse* provided for the Institutions of Secondary Education (Parochial), an examination and *Brevet de Service Liturgique* or duties of the Sacristy, whose aims were "by means of a eucharistic education and liturgical training" to develop in the student faith and piety by activities in the service of the cult, and in this way to remedy the small number of qualified persons in the service of the cult among the parishes.

The program was summarized in a brochure, *Aide-memoire de la Sacristine Rurale*, then published by Laudamus Press, 18 rue de Varennes, Paris.

At the same time a *Brevet d'Harmonium* was created.

The study and practice of the harmonium, or even the organ in certain institutions, was to be encouraged.

The sought-after result was that of developing a number of willing persons capable of giving their services to the parish, which, more often than not, lacks personnel from the musical point of view, often lacking an accompanist with even a minimum of competence.

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In practice, to be able to use written accompaniments for the Mass, Vespers or Compline, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, to know how to play the accompaniments of motets and hymns, and to have a repertoire of easy pieces, this was the aim which was striven for.

A program of studies, spread over three years, gives access to the test for the Brevet d'Harmonium, a test which covers both the practical aspects at the keyboard mentioned above, and the theoretical aspects, on the legislation regarding sacred music as pertinent to the organ and organists.

These two Brevets were very well received, and we shall see later that the results are constantly assuming greater significance.

As they are distinct from the Brevet d'Instruction Religieuse, these two Brevets give the candidate the advantage of several points in his total mark for the former Brevet.

The following year, 1949, a *Brevet de Chant Sacre*, procuring the same advantages as the preceding ones, was added to the two new Brevets. This is the one, of course, which is of most interest to us.

In what spirit was it created?

Let us examine the terms in which it was announced:

“The *Brevet de Chant Sacre* has as its goal the recognition of musical knowledge acquired in the course of years of attendance in institutions of education.

“The program will deal primarily with Liturgical Chant and the elementary study of its technique.

“Assimilated with and sustained by rehearsals of chants for the liturgical services, this study will lead first of all to the formation of students for a more active participation in the offices as well as for more careful renditions.

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“We must not be afraid of introducing this to young people. When begun in the eighth grade, for example, the study of this program will be complete by the junior year of high school, in the plan of the Brevet d’Instruction Religieuse.

“The child loves and retains more easily what he has learned and sung from an early age. He absorbs like a game the elements of technique, and by applying them at the time of rehearsal or performance, he thus acquires good habits.

“This study will therefore have a practical aspect. It will also have, in time, an apostolic aspect. It will authorize the preparation of experienced singers for our parishes, and if qualities of leadership can be noted in certain of the students, the taste of this study will lay the foundation for future directors and directresses of choirs and scholas.

“Choirmasters cannot be improvised in an off-hand fashion. There must be a competence which cannot be acquired in a day and which a purely musical training cannot provide.

“The program of this study will include:

“FIRST YEAR (preparatory course):

“*Solfège*: Knowledge of the elements of solfège, reading in the G and F clefs of modern music.

“SECOND YEAR (first stage of study):

“*Gregorian Chant*: Rules for Roman pronunciation of Latin.

“Reading of Gregorian notation: the staff, clefs, signs and accidentals. Notes and groups of notes: rhythmic signs of Solesmes, placement of the ictus, counting and elementary rhythm.

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“THIRD YEAR (second stage of study):

“*Gregorian Chant*: Complementary notes on rhythm, basic notions on the Modes and on Psalmody.

“*Modern singing*: In a practical test, the student is required to read through, in rhythm, some easy pieces (hymns and motets).”

We might ask what the results have been. They are far from disappointing.

There are two kinds of results:

Firstly, the results of the examinations:

Several institutions have participated in these examinations. Two institutions administered the examinations to the entire Freshman and Sophomore classes (High school), while three others gave them only to their scholas.

Here is the summary of results:

<i>Sacred Chant</i>	Examined	Passed	Diplomas
In 1950.....	11	8	8
In 1951.....	105	50	21
In 1952			
1st stage.....	81	57	84
2nd stage.....	30	27	
	111		27

It is understood that the Brevet Diploma is given only after successful examination of the second stage.

<i>Harmonium</i>	Examined	Passed	Diplomas
In 1950.....	3	2	0
In 1951.....	8	8	8
In 1952.....	5	5	3

<i>Liturgical Service</i>	Examined	Passed	Diplomas
In 1950.....	71	71	71
In 1951.....	43	35	35
In 1952.....	81	73	73

Secondly, positive results for the chant:

It is undeniable that this technical training permits a more careful execution of the chant, and of Gregorian chant in particular. The children apply with ease the laws of technique, and for the remainder of the time spent in school until the completion of studies, this application is made automatically, granted, of course, that it is given scope for expression and development.

We must call attention to certain reservations, however.

Are there obstacles?

Let us point out three:

Firstly, the program planned for application to the eighth grade, Freshman year of high school and the Sophomore year ought to be moved up and henceforth arranged for the classes of the seventh grade, eighth grade and Freshman year, because of the fact that the Sophomore class is already required to pass many official examinations, and ought not to be overloaded with more. [Editor's Note: American schools often place particularly heavy loads on Sophomore students, too, and this observation may thus be worthwhile considering in organizing programs for American schools.]

Secondly, among older students, in general, we note greater apathy and less interest for Sacred Chant and Liturgy, whereas among the younger ones, we find more consistent attention and more marked curiosity for this "game" of technique as preparation for Liturgical Prayer.

Lastly, in certain institutions, we must take note of the reactions of some parents who, concerning this study, raise the standard cry "What good is all this?", since they have not understood the educational side of the matter with its both religious and musical point of view.

SACRED MUSIC IN SCHOOL

From the religious point of view, this study prepares for the over-all spirituality which is nothing more nor less than the liturgical prayer and true piety of the Church. What more is there to say?

From the musical point of view, we may remark that Gregorian Chant plays a role in the teaching of music in the official program (state schools), and that it is a music of distinctly peaceful character . . . more so than these tunes usually heard on the radio in the course of moments of leisure in the home.

In these institutions, thanks be to God, the authorities have held to their point of view, and they have been right.

We conclude simply in saying that we are still at the experimental stage in our diocese of Cambrai, but that this experiment is proving worthwhile. We shall be happy if it can be of use in the development of Sacred Chant among the youth of our schools for the rendering of greater glory to God.

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